

On page 16, please amend the abstract as follows:

Abstract of the Disclosure

~~The invention relates to~~ With devices and methods for reducing the contamination of a sensor, ~~with which~~ a sensor or sensor element – preferably a hot film air-mass meter – is deactivated when a software function integrated in the electronic control unit detects a possible contamination or a media carry-in. The sensor is deactivated using a high-side switch in the voltage supply or a low-side switch in the ground connection, wherein the media carry-in detection and the switch control are carried out by the control unit or an evaluation unit in the sensor. After the sensor is deactivated, a substitute signal is optionally generated that replaces the missing output signal of the sensor.

~~(Figure 2)~~